

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ARA-06 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
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C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 18483

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: JA, CU, EWWT
SUBJECT: JAPAN CUBA TRADE

REF: TOKYO 17220

SUMMARY: TALKS ON IMMEDIATE PROBLEM OF UNSHIPPED JAPANESE GOODS TO CUBA ARE NEARING SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION, BUT MITI IS PESSIMISTIC ON CUBAN TRADE PROSPECTS IN NEAR FUTURE. END SUMMARY.

1. MITI OCEANAS DIV DEP. DIRECTOR KOHDA TOLD US DEC 16 THAT TALKS BETWEEN JAPANESE EXPORTERS AND AMADEO BLANCO VALDES-FOULY, ASIAN BUREAU DG, CUBAN OVERSEAS TRADE MINISTRY (AND FORMERLY COMMERCIAL COUNSELOR AT THE CUBAN EMBASSY IN TOKYO), ARE EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED SUCCESSFULLY BY THE END OF THIS WEEK. APPROXIMATELY 190,000 METRIC TONS OF TEXTILES, MACHINERY AND TRANSPORTATION EQUIPMENT, VALUED AT AS MUCH AS \$200 MILLION, HAVE PILED UP ON JAPANESE DOCKS AWAITING SHIPMENT TO CUBA. THE CUBANS HAVE CANDIDLY ADMITTED THAT FOREIGN EXCHANGE SHORTAGES DUE TO THE DEPRESSED WORLD SUGAR MARKET HAVE PRESENTED THEM FROM OPENING LETTERS OF CREDIT FOR THE GOODS. ADDITIONALLY, A LACK OF PORT CAPACITY HAS ALLEGEDLY HAMPERED DELIVERY.

2. KOHDA SAID THE TALKS HAVE CONCENTRATED ON DELIVERY
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SCHEMES, INTEREST PAYMENTS AND WAREHOUSE FEES.

ONCE THESE QUESTIONS ARE SETTLED PRIVATE FINANCING
WILL BE ARRANGED. THE CUBANS HAVE NOT LINKED SHIPMENT
SCHEDULES TO FURTHER SUGAR PURCHASES BY JAPAN. (IN
1975 JAPAN BOUGHT OVER \$300 MILLION OF CUBAN SUGAR
BUT ACCORDING TO KOHDA, THE AMOUNT HAS "DRASTICALLY
FALLEN" IN 1976). KOHDA OBSERVED THAT THE TALKS,
IN WHICH THE GOJ DID NOT DIRECTLY PARTICIPATE, HAVE
BEEN FAIRLY ROUGH, AND THAT JAPANESE BUSINESSMEN ARE
SOURED ON CUBA AS A TRADING PARTNER. HE SEES LITTLE
PROSPECT FOR AN EXPANSION OF JAPAN-CUBA TRADE IN THE
NEAR FUTURE.

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